1	2	3	4	5
35.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
36.	Pondicherry	0	0	0
37.	Total (UTs)	. 34	50	45
38.	Total (All India)	2370	2378	2347

Source: Accidential deaths and suicides in India.

Children killed by army ambush in J&K

*327. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:
SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that an army ambush killed three innocent children in J&K; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking so that such mistakes do not happen in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) In the light of the recent spurt in infiltration attempts in the State of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), the Army troops have been put on high alert. On the night of 23rd/24th July, 2005, the Army laid an ambush near Bangargund (near Vilgam in Kupwara District in North Kashmir). At about 01.55 hours, the ambush party noticed a movement of three to four persons. As they approached the ambush site, the Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) challenged the group, asking them to identify themselves. The challenged persons started running in various directions. They were again warned to stop. However, when they did not heed to the warning, the JCO activated the mine, that had been placed to cover the ambush site. On hearing the blast and subsequent cries of wounded persons, the JCO and two other Army personnel moved ahead to investigate. The search of the ambush site revealed two fatal and two non-fatal civilian casualties. The injured were immediately provided first aid and evacuated to a Field Ambulance. One of the injured later succumbed to injuries. On further investigation, it was revealed that the casualties were civilians aged between 15 to 18 years and residents of Bangargund village.

The area of current incident adjoins the Rajwar forest, which is a traditional infiltration route from Keran Sector, leading to the areas in Kupwara region. On numerous occasions, the Army had requested the villagers to restrict their movement at night, and in case of emergencies, the persons moving were to carry lanterns/torches.

However, the incident has been deeply regretted by the Army. Compensation of Rs. three lakhs each to the dead and Rs. two lakhs to the injured civilian has been paid. It is pertinent to mention that, the troops deployed in J&K are in a state of perpetual high alert, in view of the recent spurt in infiltration attempts by terrorists. To avoid repetition of incidents of collateral damage due to mistaken identity, the local population has been once again cautioned to strictly follow the instructions under Section 144 and in case of emergenices, carry lanterns/torches at night. The Army troops, in turn have been sensitized to- exercise restraint and use discretion during conduct of counter terrorist operations.

Decline in rural employment rate

*328. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that in recent years rural employment rate has declined;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the proposals and action plan of Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Rural Development has not conducted any survey on the rural unemployment rate. However, according to the 55th Round survey on employment conducted by the National sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) in 1999-2000, the unemployment rate in rural areas on Current Daily Status basis was estimated as 7.2 percentage of labour force, which was 5.6 percentage in the year 1993-1994.

2. Tenth Plan envisages creation of 50 million employment opportunities during 2002-07. To create employment potential, the Tenth Plan has